AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1-19. **(CANCELED)**

20. **(NEW)** A composite material comprising:

a. a metallic inner support,

b. at least one outer reinforcement material having an open structure, the outer reinforcement material having a metallic connection to the inner support;

c. an overlay layer provided on the outer reinforcement material, wherein the overlay contains polyethylene.

21. **(NEW)** The composite material of claim 20 wherein the overlay layer contains at least one of:

a. high-molecular polyethylene,

b. ultrahigh-molecular polyethylene, and/or

c. polyethylene compounds.

22. **(NEW)** The composite material of claim 20 wherein the material of the overlay layer at least partly fills the openings of the outer reinforcement material.

23. **(NEW)** The composite material of claim 20 wherein the overlay layer, as measured above the outer reinforcement material, has a thickness of 5 μm to 1.5 mm

24. **(NEW)** The composite material of claim 20 wherein the overlay layer, as measured above the outer reinforcement material, has a thickness of 100 to 300 μm.

25. **(NEW)** The composite material of claim 20 wherein the inner support and the outer reinforcement material are connected to each other by at least one of:

a. a sintered connection,

b. a welded connection,

c. a soldered connection, and/or

d. a galvanized connection.

26. **(NEW)** The composite material of claim 20 wherein the inner support is formed of at least one of steel, stainless steel, aluminum, bronze, brass, titanium and/or copper.

27. **(NEW)** The composite material of claim 20 wherein the inner support has a thickness of 0.05 to 10 mm.

28. **(NEW)** The composite material of claim 20 wherein the inner support has a thickness of 0.2 to 3 mm.

29. **(NEW)** The composite material of claim 20 wherein the outer reinforcement material is a metal fabric.

30. **(NEW)** The composite material of claim 20 wherein the outer reinforcement material is formed of at least one of:

a. wire mesh,

b. expanded metal fabric,

c. metal fleece,

d. metal foam, and/or

e. a perforated metal plate.

31. (NEW) The composite material of claim 20 wherein the outer reinforcement material is formed of at least one of bronze, copper, chrome, nickel, zinc, iron, and/or aluminum.

32. (NEW) The composite material of claim 20 wherein the outer reinforcement material has a thickness of 0.1 to 6 mm.

33. (NEW) The composite material of claim 20 wherein the outer reinforcement material has a thickness of 0.2 to 2 mm.

34. (NEW) The composite material of claim 20 wherein the metallic connection between the outer reinforcement material and the inner support is defined as an intermediate metallic layer.

35. (NEW) The composite material of claim 34 wherein the intermediate metallic layer is galvanized and/or plated between the inner support and the outer reinforcement material.

36. (NEW) The composite material of claim 34 wherein the intermediate metallic layer is formed of at least one of bronze, copper, chrome, nickel, zinc, iron, and/or aluminum.

37. (NEW) The composite material of claim 34 wherein the intermediate metallic layer has a thickness of 1 to 100 μm.

38. (NEW) The composite material of claim 20 wherein the overlay layer is calandered, painted, and/or laminated into the outer reinforcement material.

39. (NEW) The composite material of claim 20 formed into a sliding bearing wherein the overlay layer and/or the outer reinforcement material form the outer sliding surface of the sliding bearing.

40. **(NEW)** The composite material of claim 20 wherein the overlay layer contains less than 10% polytetrafluouroethylene.

41. **(NEW)** The composite material of claim 40 wherein the overlay layer contains no polytetrafluouroethylene.

42. **(NEW)** The composite material of claim 40 wherein the overlay layer contains no fillers formed predominantly of calcium.

43. **(NEW)** The composite material of claim 20 wherein the overlay layer contains no calcium carbonate.

44. **(NEW)** The composite material of claim 20 wherein the overlay layer contains no calcium carbonate.

45. **(NEW)** The composite material of claim 20 wherein:
    a. the outer reinforcement material includes a wire mesh, and
    b. the overlay layer contains less than 10% polytetrafluouroethylene.

46. **(NEW)** The composite material of claim 45 wherein the wire mesh contains bronze.

47. **(NEW)** The composite material of claim 46 wherein the overlay layer contains no fillers formed predominantly of calcium.

48. **(NEW)** A composite material comprising:

a. a metallic substrate,

b. an outer layer of porous metallic reinforcement material, the outer layer having connections to the metallic substrate across the surface of the metallic substrate,

c. an overlay layer situated in the pores of the outer layer, wherein the overlay layer contains polyethylene,

wherein the outer layer and/or the overlay layer define the outer surface of a bearing.

49. **(NEW)** A composite material comprising:

a. a metallic substrate having an outer surface,

b. a reinforcing layer of metallic material having:

i. an inner surface facing the outer surface of the metallic substrate, and

ii. an opposing outer surface which at least partially defines the outer bearing surface of a sliding structure,

wherein:

(1) the inner surface of the reinforcing layer is metallically connected to the outer surface of the substrate along at least numerous locations of the outer surface of the substrate,

(2) voids are defined within a substantial portion of the reinforcing layer, and

(3) the voids contain polyethylene.